



WEEKLY NEWS LETTER

THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF THE A. F. of L., BY INSTRUCTION OF ST. LOUIS CONVENTION, DIRECTED THE OFFICERS AT HEADQUARTERS TO FURNISH A WEEKLY NEWS LETTER, FREE OF COST, TO ALL OFFICIAL LABOR PUBLICATIONS.

Containing a brief summary of important matters, affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative and judicial fields, and such other information that will further the development and progress of the trade union movement.

No. 14

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR
HEADQUARTERS
801-809 G ST. N. W., WASHINGTON, D. C.
FRANK MORRISON, SECRETARY SAMUEL GOMPERS, PRESIDENT

REPORT EXPECTED SOON

Attorneys Appointed by Judge Wright in the Celebrated Contempt Case Ready to Submit Findings.

Washington, June 24.—"The judgment of the Court of Appeals is reversed and the case remanded with directions to reverse the judgment of the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia and remand the case to that court with direction that the contempt proceedings * * * be dismissed, but without prejudice to the power and right of the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia to punish by a proper proceeding contempt, if any, committed against it."

The above is the closing sentence in the decision rendered by the United States Supreme Court whereby the criminal sentences imposed on the officials of the American Federation of Labor were set aside. Pursuant to and in accordance with the decision, Justice Wright appointed a "committee" of attorneys, J. J. Darlington, Daniel Davenport and James Beck, attorneys for the Anti-Boycott Association and the National Manufacturers' Association, and who assisted in the prosecution of the American Federation of Labor, to "inquire whether there is reasonable cause to believe the said persons guilty as aforesaid, and if yea, they are hereby empowered and directed forthwith to prepare, file, present and prosecute against the persons heretofore first named charges of contempt of court to the end that the dignity of the court be established, vindicated and satisfied."

It is now stated that the "committee" has concluded its labors, and are ready to submit its findings. The report will not be made public until it is actually filed with the court. Under the decision of the United States Supreme Court it is within the jurisdiction of Justice Wright to determine whether or not a contempt has been committed, and under the ruling Justice Wright can now reimpose the sentences against President Gompers, Secretary Morrison and John Mitchell should he desire to do so. If Justice Wright still entertains the same venomous spirit toward the American Federation of Labor officials as he did when the jail sentences were imposed it is not difficult to predict the outcome of the present proceeding.

TO AMEND PURE FOOD LAW

Washington, June 24.—Congressman Shirley of Kentucky has introduced a bill in the House of Representatives amending the Pure Food and Drugs Act, aiming to prohibit false and misleading statements as to the curative value of medicinal preparations.

OF SPECIAL IMPORTANCE

A Conference of Labor Officials Has Been Called to be Held at Indianapolis, Ind., Thursday, June 29.

Washington, June 24.—At the last meeting of the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor, June 12-17, a joint conference was held with the executive officers of the Building Trades Department, Metal Trades Department and the Union Label Trades Department, and it was decided that a conference should be held in the Dennison Hotel, Indianapolis, Indiana, beginning at 10 o'clock Thursday morning, June 29, 1911. It is urged in the official communication which has been sent out that at least one officer of each of the International organizations be present, for the purpose of discussing the necessity of co-operative and energetic action for the raising of funds to aid the officers of the International Bridge and Structural Iron Workers in what has been termed "The McNamara Case", and for the prosecution of the kidnappers, and to take such action as the ends of justice may warrant. The conference first referred to decided that all National and International labor organizations be called upon and urged to contribute an amount equal to 25 cents per member, the International officers to raise the amounts from their respective membership in the form and manner best adapted to each organization, and the amounts received transmitted to Frank Morrison, Secretary, American Federation of Labor, who is also Secretary of the McNamara Legal Defense Committee. It is anticipated that the conference to be held on June 29 at Indianapolis, will be largely attended.

WOMEN'S TRADE UNION LEAGUE

Washington, June 24.—The third biennial convention of the National Women's Trade Union League, held in Faneuil Hall, Boston, was a success in every particular. The Central Labor Union of Boston, through its officials, accorded the attending delegates every means whereby to make their stay pleasant, and the convention a notable one.

SHOE REPAIRERS ORGANIZED

Washington, June 24.—The organization committee of the Minneapolis Trades and Labor Assembly has just organized a Shoe Repairers' Union in affiliation with the National Boot and Shoe Workers.

CONVIOT LABOR ON ROADS

Washington, June 24.—After three weeks strike the Sheet Metal Workers of Indianapolis, Indiana, secured 2½¢ per hour increase, and a two-year agreement; also a local union of Sheet Metal Workers in Birmingham, Alabama, have secured an increase in wages.

PERU'S LIABILITY LAW

Washington, June 24.—Practically every country on the face of the globe realizes that an employer's liability and workmen's compensation law is a necessary adjunct to civilization. Word has just been received from Peru that President Leguia has just signed what is known as the Peruvian Employers' Liability Law.

SEAMEN ARE WINNING

All Available News from Various Sections of the World and Maritime Centers Indicate Victory for the Sailors.

Washington, June 24.—While it is impossible to estimate just what proportion of the sailors throughout the world have been successful thus far in their contest for better wages and treatment, yet from official reports received at the headquarters of the American Federation of Labor indications point to a fair degree of success. In fact, there have been many settlements made which were unexpected. A settlement has been made with the Atlantic Coastwise Steamship Companies, thus closing a strike against the Morgan line, which occurred a day or so ago. It is also reported from London that an increase in wage has been granted by the White Star Line and the Canadian Pacific Railway together with satisfactory settlements with other large shipping companies. News is necessarily meagre owing to the fact that the contest extends over such a very wide scope.

RAILWAY MAIL CLERKS

Washington, June 24.—While the Post Office Department dominated the Railway Mail Association Convention to a very great degree, yet it was not in full control. The convention adopted the initiative and referendum, which the Department is very much opposed to, for this plan will give the members of the Association an opportunity to decide questions of vital interest by secret ballot. The Convention also passed resolutions condemning the methods employed by Department inspectors. It must be remembered that the inspectors have been the cause of practically all of the trouble now existing in the Department, although these inspectors are working under direct instructions from the Department. The Convention also provided for a welfare committee and this also has been opposed very vigorously by the Department at all times. So to sum the matter up, while the Department endeavored to exercise an absolute control, it has failed in a most signal manner. The initiative and referendum will give the employes in the service an opportunity to express their views without fear of being victimized.

PRESSMEN'S CONVENTION

Secretary Morrison and Treasurer Lennon Guests of International Printing Pressmen's Union.

Washington, June 24.—The convention of the International Printing Pressmen's union was held at Hale Springs, Tenn., during the past week. The dedication of the new home for indigent members of the organization was also a feature of the week. Secretary Morrison and Treasurer John B. Lennon attended as the guests of the International Union and also as representatives of the American Federation of Labor.

ELECTION OF SENATORS

Washington, June 24.—After the House of Representatives passed the bill providing for election of senators by direct vote it went to the senate, which added the Bristow amendment (giving federal control over elections). The amended bill was then sent back to the house, but the house has defeated the Bristow amendment by an overwhelming vote and passed it back to the senate. The amendment is considered to be a "joker."

MISLEADING REPORTS

Sinister Motives Behind Statements that Large Fund Has Been Raised to Assist the McNamara Defense.

Washington, June 24.--Statements in newspapers have been made with regularity, and evidently systematically, asserting that a large fund has already been raised for the purpose of making it possible that a fair and impartial trial shall be accorded the members of organized labor charged with the Los Angeles dynamiting outrage. These stories are also creeping into the columns of labor journals. The statements are made with the self-evident purpose to soothe the feelings of organized labor into a sense of security, and in order that only a beggarly sum shall be raised in support of those who are to be shortly tried for the heinous crime charged. Let it be understood and emphatically so, that a comparatively small amount of money has as yet been received at the headquarters of the American Federation of Labor, in response to the appeal sent out on May 6, 1911. It is necessary that there be sufficient funds to guarantee the men charged with a fair and impartial trial, and rumors and false stories which have been given currency should not be allowed to hinder organized labor in fulfilling its part in raising a sufficient amount of money to defray the legitimate expenses which must of necessity be incurred.

EIGHT-HOURS FOR QUARRY WORKERS

Washington, June 24.--A settlement has just been made at St. George, Maine, whereby the Quarry Workers employed by two firms have secured the eight-hour day. This accomplishment practically places the Quarry Workers in New England on a general eight-hour basis.

WOMEN-WORKERS

Washington, June 24.--The Department of Agriculture of Prince Edward Island is establishing women's institutes. They are being organized in all portions of the Province, with a small membership fee. The Department purposes to furnish lectures at least twice a year and literature on domestic economy, hygiene and dietetics. Housekeepers are instructed on the importance of ventilation, cleanliness, cooking of foods, change of diet, nurture of infants, etc.

OLD COUNTRY WOMEN

Washington, June 24.--The number of women employed in Germany, according to the last statistical data is 9,400,000; France, 6,800,000; Austria, 5,600,000; and England, 5,300,000, this great number being employed in manufactures and trades.

A SUCCESSFUL SEASON

Washington, June 24.--The Quarry Workers' International Union of North America reports that 38 local unions have this year effected new agreements which run from one to five years, and with an increase in wages of from one to six cents per hour.

UNEMPLOYMENT BILL

Great Britain's Labor Party Reintroduces "Right to Work" Bill in Parliament.

Washington, June 24.—The text of the Labor party's bill, entitled "Right to Work," which makes provisions for work or maintenance being given to the unemployed, has just been made public. The bill, among provisions putting into operation the proper machinery for execution, provides for the preparation in advance of undertakings of public utility upon which workmen could be employed at the ordinary wage, thus avoiding the necessity for providing temporary relief for workmen during periods of commercial inactivity. According to authorities it is claimed that unemployment ranges from 3 to 20 per cent.

COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Washington, June 24.—In a preliminary statement issued by the United Textile Factory Workers' Association, Great Britain, containing the subjects to be discussed at the coming convention, is the following: "To consider the compulsory attendance at evening continuation schools of boys and girls over 14 years of age, the time of school attendance to be from October to March in each year, schools to be open three nights a week, and the cost to be borne by the state. Attendance is suggested until the age of 18 has been reached."

BRITISH TRADE UNION BENEFITS

Washington, June 24.—The labor department of the board of trade of Great Britain has just issued a statistical report on the activities of the trade unions in respect to their financial operations. The grand total of membership entitled to benefits was 2,358,040. The amount of ordinary unemployed benefits paid in 1908 by 1,059 unions was over \$6,000,000. Traveling benefits amounted to \$31,000, while emigration, fares and removals reached \$13,000.

UNIONS IN SWITZERLAND

Washington, June 24.—It is said that labor conditions in Switzerland are somewhat better than anywhere on the European continent, and the organized workmen relatively greater. The trade union movement, however, is not thoroughly united, political and religious questions precluding a complete unification. Beneficial associations and other organizations based on religion are common in Switzerland. Of a total 113,800 organized workmen in 1910, only 67,348 were affiliated with the general federation of that country, the "Trade Union Association." The railway workers have an 82 per cent organization. Membership is on the increase.

REFUSE TO BE SEARCHED

Washington, June 24.—Four hundred employes of the Gorton Rubber Works, Openshaw, near Manchester, Great Britain, have ceased work for the reason that they object to signing an agreement permitting themselves to be searched. Another branch of the firm at Droylsden has also been closed down from the same cause.

ENGLISH LOYALTY

Washington, June 24.—Great Britain's trade unionists are noted for commendable acts, and none more so than one which has just come to light. It appears that three years ago the treasurer of the Greenock Boilermakers' Society was the victim of a robbery, \$300 of the society's funds having been stolen. Suspicion was cast on the treasurer and he was removed from office. Recently evidence has been produced to completely exonerate him, and as a result the society has reinstated him as its treasurer in reparation of the wrong committed.

DECLARED UNCONSTITUTIONAL

Washington, June 24.—Word is received from Riverside, Cal., that the superior court has just declared the woman's eight-hour law, recently passed by the legislature of that state, unconstitutional. The grounds for declaring the invalidity of the law were that it was class legislation and antagonistic to the fundamental law of the land. Intense feeling has been engendered by the decision.

LABOR WINS AT POLLS

Washington, June 24.—The men of labor at Portland, Ore., have just achieved a victory in defeating a conspicuous enemy of organized labor for mayor, and electing a friend. The defeated mayoralty candidate, it is alleged, was favorable to any plan making for the extermination of the unions, and organized labor of that city reduced its displeasure toward his attitude to a sufficient number of votes to compel the union buster to remain in private life. Union men were also elected to the council.

IN DEFENSE OF CLERKS

Washington, June 24.—Threatening to introduce a resolution repealing the "presidential muzzle law" if the Lloyd bill, now pending before the civil service reform committee, which returns to the railway mail clerks and other federal employes their right to petition Congress, did not pass, Congressman Buchanan, labor member from Illinois, indorsed the statements publicly made by Speaker Champ Clark in reference to the right of every citizen to petition Congress. "I most sincerely hope that the Lloyd bill will be passed by Congress," said Mr. Buchanan, "and will meet the condition without making it necessary for Congress to resort to more drastic measures. If it does not, however, I will introduce a resolution directly bearing on the presidential muzzle law, and demanding that it be forthwith repealed because of its unconstitutionality."

POSTOFFICE EMPLOYEES

Washington, June 24.—Eleven English delegates attended the International conference of postoffice employes held recently at Paris. The objects of the conference was to bind the postal employes in all countries into closer relations. The English delegates enunciated the principle at the conference that strikes in the service were futile in effecting remedial measures, but that legislation must be relied upon entirely to redress any wrongs which might creep into the service.

DUST EXTRACTOR

Washington, June 24.—A new coal dust extractor is soon to be introduced in the coal mines of the Dumfermline District, Scotland. The extractor consists of a combination of pressure air jets worked by electricity, directed upon the surface to be cleaned in order to raise the dust, and the simultaneous withdrawal of the dust by suction. The apparatus can either be operated by an electric motor or compressed air.

A GOOD WORD

Washington, June 24.—So seldom does it occur that the daily press has a good word for the organizations of labor that when it does happen some surprise must of necessity follow. The Washington Post of the 15th took occasion to publish an editorial relating to the efforts of the seamen of the world to wrest from the shipping companies a living wage and humane conditions. The refreshing portion of the article attributes all former successful attempts made by the seamen to gain justice to have been solely the result of the Seamen's union. The comment further states that the "Seamen's employers are less inclined to make concessions than those engaged in other lines of business. The sailor is poorly paid, badly fed and harshly handled as a general thing, and in the present case his demands represent a totaling of wrongs calculated to stagger his close-fisted employer." The Post states that undoubtedly, even with the inconvenience experienced by the strike, popular sympathy is with the seamen.

INCREASING MEMBERSHIP

Washington, June 24.—The Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants in Great Britain is increasing in membership steadily. Every week a statement is issued showing the increase from its several branches. The average increase has been and is approximately 1,000 per month.

BARBERS WIN STRIKE

Washington, June 24.—The barbers in Louisville, Ky. were met by a refusal upon the part of the boss barbers some months ago, to sign their agreement, and as a consequence a strike took place in practically every shop in the city. News has just been received that the employers have re-considered their former action and a great majority of them have now signed the agreement proposed by the journeymen barbers and the latter have returned to work.

RETAIL CLERKS BECOMING MILITANT

Washington, June 24.—The retail clerks of East St. Louis, Ill., after a three days' strike, have won a signal victory. In the past it has been practically an unknown circumstance among the retail clerks to cease work as a protest against unfair conditions. However, during the last few months, three organizations of retail clerks in the state of Illinois have struck against unfair conditions, and the outcome of these strikes has been exceedingly successful.

TWELVE THOUSAND MEN ON STRIKE

The Baldwin Locomotive Works Completely Closed Down as the Result of Discriminating Tactics.

Washington, June 24.--The Baldwin Locomotive Works, one plant of which is located in Philadelphia the other at Eddystone, a suburb of Chester, Pa. is closed down as the result of the 12,000 employes ceasing work. A few weeks ago a number of men were laid off, and strangely enough these men were the active spirits in the various organizations. This act caused considerable comment and uneasiness on the part of their fellow members, but no action was taken. Following this, however, a number of employes were told to remove their union buttons and because some refused they were laid off. It became apparent that the company had decided to destroy the organizations in its employ. When this fact became generally known it resulted in practically every man employed in the two plants mentioned leaving the works. The Locomotive Company has a number of large contracts on hand. With a cessation of work continuing any considerable length of time the Company will be mulcted in penalties for undelivered product. The men on strike are firm and everything indicates that a victory is in store for them.

JUST PLAIN VINDICTIVENESS

Washington, June 24.--Evidence is cumulative of the fact that the heads of the Post Office Department are pursuing an extremely vindictive course. A railway mail clerk, O. J. Rogers by name, of Sedalia, Mo., recently tendered to the Department his resignation for the purpose of engaging in the newspaper business. In an early issue of his paper he advised that the men in the service be permitted to decide themselves whether or not they should become affiliated with the American Federation of Labor without interference upon the part of the Department. As a result of this advice and notwithstanding that his resignation had been tendered, the Department officials could not let the opportunity escape of displaying their animosity and vindictiveness toward a former employe, and instead of accepting the resignation already tendered, summarily discharged him. "Whom the gods would destroy they first make mad."

OHIO'S EMPLOYMENT OFFICES

Washington, June 24.--The State of Ohio has five free public employment offices, one each being located at Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton and Toledo, under the supervision of the Bureau of Labor Statistics. A report has just been received for the last quarter, giving in detail the number of people assisted in procuring employment, and the total reaches 8,731.

EMPLOYER'S LIABILITY LAW

Washington, June 24.--A copy of an act in relation to employer's liability and Workmen's compensation, approved by the legislature of the State of New Hampshire, has just been received. The measure follows the general line of this class of measures, not having any distinguishing features.

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EFFICIENCY OF AMERICAN CARPENTER

Congressman Redfield of New York, Makes Emphatic Statements Relative to American Tradesmen.

Washington, June 24.--Representative William C. Redfield of New York, in the course of a speech on the wool schedule recounted his experience with French carpenters while in the city of Paris. His statement follows:

"Once when my office was located in the city of Paris, I employed a lot of French carpenters, and paid them 10 francs a day, \$1.90 each, and at the end of three or four days I was well nigh crazy. Down the long aisle of the building, I saw a familiar looking tool box with a saw sticking from the end, and I ran to the place and found a man who looked like an American carpenter. I said, 'Are you a Yankee?' and he said 'Yes'. I said, 'I want to employ you now.' He said, 'Boss, I charge \$4.50 a day'. I said, 'Come right along.' Two days later I discharged four Frenchmen, and my one American carpenter did more than the four Frenchmen, and I saved money by the process, and if somebody wants to ask me the question, there are sound, urgent, serious reasons why the American carpenter did as much work as four Frenchmen, and I shall be very glad, if you wish to detain me, to go into the details of the reason why that man is so much more efficient. In employing a French carpenter he goes to work, having eaten almost nothing. For breakfast he has nothing more than a bit--a little bit of bread (without butter) and coffee. At 11 o'clock he stops to eat a little bread and drink a little sour wine. That is all--all I ever saw any of them eat. At 3 o'clock he stops again to eat a little bread and drink a little sour wine. After he gets through at night he has what he calls a dinner. Such a man can never work at any labor requiring steady physical exertion, continuously under pressure, in competition with a man who eats three square meals a day."

BERGER ON WOOL TARIFF

Washington, June 24.--Congressman Berger has delivered his maiden speech in the House of Representatives. His address was approximately an hour in duration, and attracted much attention. He announced himself as in favor of the reduction in the wool schedule as proposed, and voted with the Democrats for the Underwood bill.

UNITED KINGDOM NOTES

Washington, June 24.--The number of labor disputes in the United Kingdom in 1910 was 506 (not including 26 carried over from 1909) involving 508,538 working people. The controversies were largely in the coal, cotton and shipping industries. A more friendly feeling was shown during last year on the part of trade union organizations toward the labor exchanges. The percentage of unemployed among 700,000 members of trade unions at the end of each month in 1910 was 4.7 compared with 7.7 in 1909.

MUSICIANS ORGANIZED

Washington, June 24.--The Musicians of Allentown, Pa., to the number of 118 have organized a local union and received a charter from the American Federation of Musicians.